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# AFGHANISTAN

Date: June 2011

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## FACT SHEET

### Infrastructure and Rehabilitation Program (IRP) - Socio-Economic Impact of Keshim to Faizabad Road Rehabilitation

#### OVERVIEW

The Keshim-Faizabad Road in Badakhshan Province connects the communities of Keshim, a district center, and Faizabad, the provincial capital. Prior to rehabilitation, the ancient route consisted of a primitive, variable-width gravel track with a limited number of poorly maintained drainage structures. Rehabilitation of the 103 kilometer road, including construction of nine bridges and more than 600 culverts, was completed in November 2010. For the 656,000 people living and working within its zone of influence, the all-weather asphalt-paved road provides reliable year-round mobility and links cities and towns in a remote region of Afghanistan. The smoother roadway, designed for travel at higher speeds than previously possible, sharply reduces wear and tear on vehicles, thus lowering costs to road users. This has many implications for poverty reduction, commerce, social access, and political integration. Below are several of the key findings of a study conducted in November and December 2010. The impacts described were measured within a one-year time span and should continue to grow over time.



#### KEY FINDINGS

- Traffic volume increased dramatically. Car traffic volume increased 22-fold and two-axle truck traffic increased by 57 percent.
- Travel times between Keshim and Faizabad decreased by almost 80 percent: from an average of seven hours to 1.5 hours.
- Average passenger fares decreased by 59 percent.
- Freight costs decreased by 36 percent and average freight loads increased from 16 to 19 tons.
- Daily freight volume increased by 24 percent.
- Twelve percent more people are reporting making at least one trip to a health facility annually.
- A greater diversity of consumer goods at better prices is available in the markets due to increased shipments of non-locally produced goods from Kabul, Keshim, and Faizabad.
- New road-side businesses are being established to service demand of increased traffic flow.
- The Keshim hospital director reported a dramatically increased patient load – a two-fold increase – because of the improved road. In addition, vehicle ownership increased among households and villages so that people are able to easily travel from remote locations to the road.